
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
Department of Workforce Services
1385 South State Street, Salt Lake City, Utah
Monthly Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, January 3, 2007
11:30 a.m.

Presiding: Paul Jackson, Chair

Present: Greg Diven, Tony Gomez, John Hill, Jon Pierpont, Kerry Steadman,
Gordon Swensen, Heidi Ballif

Absent: Charles Daud, Norman Fitzgerald

Excused: Commissioner Jim Bradley, Commissioner Colleen Johnson,
Senator Brent Goodfellow, Karen Silver

Guests: Jolyn Bevin, State Program Specialist; Connie Laws, State Program
Manager; Steve Maas, Assistant Director

Staff: Karla Aguirre, Cassy Hahn, Steve Leyba, Mary Peterson

Chairman Paul Jackson began the meeting at 11:35 am by welcoming all in attendance. Mr. Jackson made the following announcements:

- The State Council meeting will be held on January 11, 2007 at 1385 S. State, SLC. Committee meetings begin at 9:30 a.m. and the State Council meeting will run from 1-3 p.m.. John Hill will represent Central Region as Paul Jackson will be out of town. Paul invited members of the Council to attend.
- A copy of the Central Region Council, Youth Council and State Council 2007 Meeting Schedule was provided. Paul made special note that there will be no Regional Council meetings held in July or December, 2007.
- The Executive Committee Meeting scheduled on February 8, 2007 will be held as a retreat from 9:00 am – 1:00 pm. The time will be spent reviewing goals, membership, and committee structure and identifying challenges that need to be addressed to move forward. More information will be forthcoming on this meeting.
- Council meeting packets were discussed. In the past, and prior to each meeting, Region Council agenda and packets were sent electronically with a hardcopy mailed to each member. Paul suggested that we simplify the process by sending the packet electronically. A hardcopy agenda would continue to be provided at each meeting with any handouts that were not sent electronically. Paul asked if there were any concerns with this process. None were noted. The packets for the Regional Council meeting on January 25, 2007 will also be sent electronically to see how this process works. Sending the information electronically reduces preparation time and postage costs.

WIA Waiver – Connie Laws

Connie Laws provided a Waiver Request Fact Sheet that was first introduced at the Council of Council meeting in October, 2006. This fact sheet outlines the request for the Utah Department of Workforce Services (DWS) to provide a waiver request to allow up to 50% of Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Adult and Dislocated worker formula funds to be transferred into the statewide fifteen (15) percent set-a-side annually. This funding would be in addition to the fifteen (15) percent reserved for statewide activities. The intent is to expand the states Incumbent Worker Program. The waiver request is for program years 2007 and 2008.

The reason for this request is that Utah's unemployment rate is very low, at 2.5%. Our healthy economy leaves employers with a shortage of skilled workers. The number of customers being trained with WIA fund in the regions has decreased over the past two years. This money can be used to improve the skills and train incumbent workers to assist them in training to help them move up the career ladder.

The benefits outlined include:

- Providing growth industry training incentives for career ladder positions of incumbent workers. Utah is currently focusing on the growth industries of Life Sciences, Bio-Technology, Energy, and Advanced Manufacturing industries to emphasize career ladder.
- Creating a growth cycle for new hired employees and therefore creating employment for dislocated workers.
- Expect increased State Workforce Investment Board (SWIB) collaboration with growth industry employers, education and economic development to meet industry and worker training needs.
- Increased flexibility and alternatives in providing a trained workforce for emerging growth industries.

Companies who are interested would need to submit an application and based on the demand would determine how the funds are distributed. Connie Laws pointed out the recommendation is being made because we don't want to lose funding currently in place.

The waiver request was opened for discussion and included the following questions and concerns:

- How will employers be identified?
- Can multiple industries be used?
- Can the funding that is allocated be less than the 50% or separate adjustments made based on the five regions needs?
- From the Central Region perspective, as a Council there were problems with DWS staff being adequately trained. How do we meet the needs of keeping staff trained?
- Regarding Youth Council – the funding has been cut yet the needs for training are not being met. Money is being taken from those in need (high risk) and given to strong companies who should have ownership and responsibility to train their

own employees. Salt Lake and Utah County numbers of high-risk youth is growing and those will be our future customers. These are challenges to work through.

- Fear as a region it makes us vulnerable and with what protection?
- If the state makes this position, what happens if we don't have the money to meet the needs?
- If this waiver is approved would we know before the year begins and after six months if the economy goes bad, are we locked into this change for the entire period?
- At the end of year, the entire state only spends 20% of the money; does it roll over so that it is not lost to the state?
- Does making this policy in any way go counter to our efforts of trying to get or meet the new federal guidelines on TANF?
- Is this a unified State position or is Central Region taking the leadership position on this?
- Will businesses awarded incumbent worker training funds be required to hire from DWS?
- Should UTA become a training provider since they have been involved in this training?
- Employers may lose entry-level employees when they are trained due to the ability to make more money elsewhere. This appears to benefit most large employers, how can we benefit the vast majority of small employers?
- Who is the candidate pool and was a DWS customer hired versus someone else?
- Are we duplicating what the academic community has in place and should we be doing so? SLCC and SLTATC continually express that whatever industry needs they will make it happen.
- Should we go another year with a pilot of this proposal?
- Can Central Region carry the vote or have a weighted vote?
- What has been the success of other states?

A good discussion took place with the option to be considered to use the funds for a viable Utah. This will be put to a vote at the next State Council meeting where John Hill will cast the vote for Central Region. Paul noted that the information discussed today will be emailed to the Region Council Members to give them an opportunity to provide input before the January 11th State Council meeting takes place.

MOTION:

Greg Diven motioned to support the Waiver Request at the State Council meeting on January 11, 2007 with the condition that the following points be addressed:

- 1) What criteria will be used to select or approve an Employer to be considered for an Incumbent Worker Training site? Will regions have input into the selection process?
- 2) Will regions have input into the percentage of funds set aside?
 - a. Can a “weighted” vote be considered for this process in determining the percentage of funds set aside each year for Incumbent Training (based on the size of the region, this could impact their funding for individualized training to low-income customers)?
 - b. Based on the size of regions, can consideration be given for “weighted” funding allocations?
- 3) What assurances and/or monitoring will occur to ensure DWS customers will have the opportunity to compete for those entry-level positions that are vacated by employees who have been promoted within the company as a result of Incumbent Worker Training?
- 4) Can further explanation be offered regarding the philosophy of DWS supporting employers with Federal funds in providing their own employee training?
 - a. How will small employers be treated in the process?
- 5) How does an Incumbent Worker Training program differentiate from an academic program and higher education's responsibility?

John Hill seconded the motion. All voted “Aye”. The motion carried.

The information/minutes will be sent to Council Members with the recommendation of this Executive Committee in requesting their vote on this Waiver Request. Paul asked that Council Members call him if they have any questions (442-3360 work; 718-0614 cell).

Paul Jackson concluded the meeting by thanking Greg Diven for his presentation to WIC on the bridging and business of the Executive Roundtable with Manufacturing. Heidi Ballif with the Chamber of Commerce is putting together a meeting with major employers on January 29, 2007. Invitations will be sent out. The meeting was adjourned at 12:52 pm.